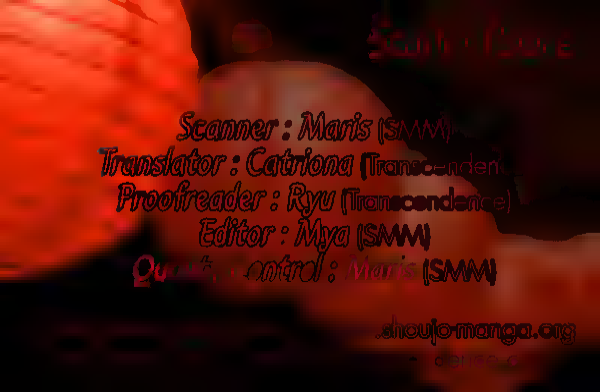
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緋色王城

Scarlet Palace

2

王城暗殺

漫畫◎依歡

緋色王城 2 漫畫◎依歡

東立

NT-95

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被稱為暴君的年輕淀王珣，回到了淀國都城…

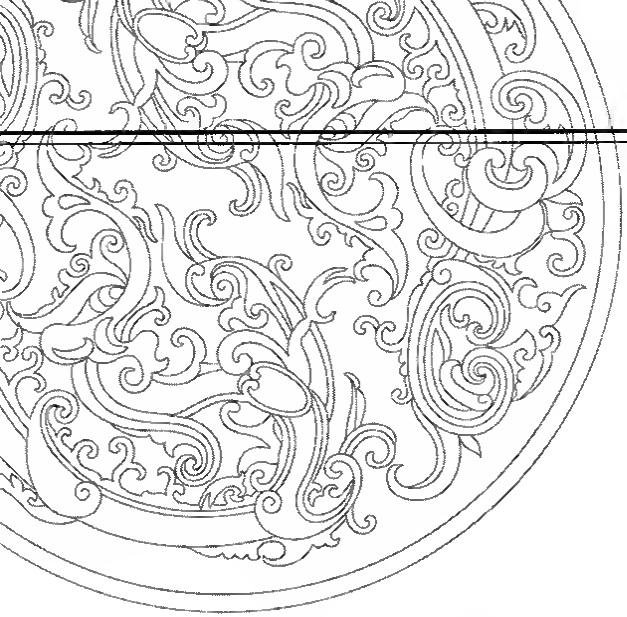
為了調查子綠的事件，也為了能夠接近大王，
寧湖自願成為陵大人的親侍。
喜怒無常、毫無忌憚的陵鈺，成為眾臣暗殺的目標，
寧湖能幫助他逃過一劫？
出征的大王傳來受傷的消息，引起宮廷的騷動。
淀王回到王城，面對的居然是……

因為改成雙月刊連載，出書速度慢了點，不過還是很高興順利出了第2集。

除了陵大人繼續在本集裡媲美(?)之外，其實我也很喜歡剛人這個角色，發生什麼事感覺都能很鎮靜面對，凡事也是胸有成竹的樣子。無論如何，這樣的人感覺起來就是很安心吧！

大家一直催的大王終於回來了，這也代表下一集故事會有很大的波瀾，請一定要看喔！

緋色王城
Scarlet Palace
2



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Chapter 5: The Secret Palace
第五回 秘密之殿

IMAGINE THAT YOU ARE...
WITHIN THE BUTTERFLY'S DREAM!

Rumor has it that Lord Lingyu...
doesn't like to approach his servants.
What is...
happening?

BUT I...
AM VERY INTERESTED IN YOU.
YOU SHOULD FEEL HAPPY INSTEAD.
YOU SAID I AM DISTANT FROM MY SERVANTS.
THAT IS BECAUSE I AM NOT INTERESTED IN THEM.
But then...
He will find out that I am a girl!

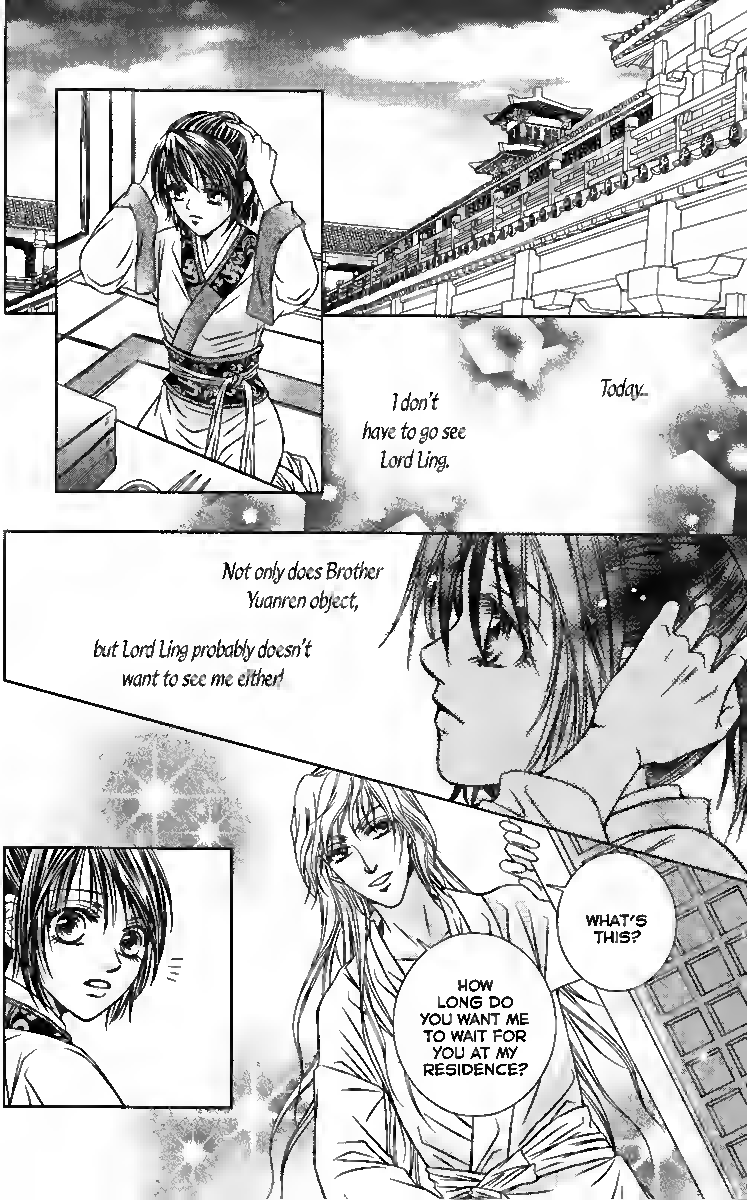
I AM ONLY AN ORDINARY SERVANT!
LORD CHAMBER-LAIN!
STOP!
I AM GRATEFUL FOR YOUR AFFEC-TION...
BUT I CANNOT ACCEPT IT!
WHAT IS THIS.
NOT ONLY DO YOU LOOK LIKE A GIRL,
BUT YOU ALSO ACT LIKE ONE.
DON'T YOU THINK SO, YUANREN?

YOU EVEN CAME IN PERSON TO TAKE YOUR SERVANT BACK. YOU PAMPER HIM TOO MUCH!
BUT WHEN WILL YOU STOP ME?
NINGHU IS ALSO YOUR SERVANT.
I WON'T STOP ANYTHING.
PALACE RUMORS SAY THAT THE BEAUTIFUL LORD CHAMBERLAIN IS ACTUALLY A WOMAN.
IF YOU ACTUALLY DO SOMETHING WITH NINGHU, WE WILL HAVE A DEFINITE ANSWER TO THAT RUMOR.

EXCEPT IN THIS FILTHY SERAGLIO,
I BELIEVE THAT LORD LING WOULDN'T...
DO ANYTHING SCANDALOUS TO DISHONOR THE PALACE RULES.
ARE YOU USING THAT TONE BECAUSE YOU ARE ANGRY?
You purposely placed emphasis on some words
NO.
He is angry
CHUCKLE
LET'S GO!
YES!

Brother Yuanren...
He is so silent.
He must be furious
That's right...
I allowed myself to fall into this dangerous situation.
Even though Brother Yuanren tells m...
I cannot treat eunuchs as men...
The way that Lord Ling looks at me...
still makes me anxious and confused

PRIME MINISTER!
THAT EUNUCH FROM QI KINGDOM IS TOO MUCH!
HE RELIES ON THE KING'S AFFECTION FOR HIM,
AND HE EVEN LOOKED DOWN UPON YOU!
HE'LL SURELY BE A HUGE NUISANCE IF HE REMAINS IN THE PALACE!
THE KING IS ABSENT FROM THE PALACE RIGHT NOW.
IT IS THE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY!
WHY DON'T WE...
ARE YOU SUGGESTING...
THAT WE ASSASSINATE LINGYU?
PRIME MINISTER..


Today...
I don't have to go see Lord Ling.
Not only does Brother Yuanren object,
but Lord Ling probably doesn't want to see me either!
WHAT'S THIS?
HOW LONG DO YOU WANT ME TO WAIT FOR YOU AT MY RESIDENCE?

LORD CHAMBER-LAIN?
Why is your hair so messy-?
WITHOUT YOU,
I CAN'T EVEN COMB MY HAIR PROPERLY.
How could that happen?
He has always combed his hair by himself
Eh?
I CAN'T EVEN DRESS MYSELF CORRECTLY!
SINCE I HAVE PERSONALLY COME TO PICK YOU UP,
PLEASE FORGET WHAT HAPPENED YESTERDAY!
LET'S GO!
EH?
PLEASE WAIT! ALLOW ME TO TELL LORD JING--
HE WILL KNOW EVENTUALLY!

Lord Lingyu is acting like a child.
What is this..
MY LORD! THE ROYAL SCHOLAR REQUESTS A MEETING WITH YOU.
EH?
LET HIM ENTER.
YES.
I PROMISED YOU...
FOR EVERY STORY YOU TELL, I WILL MEET ONE PERSON!

But I haven't forgotten...
why I came here to be his servant.
Lord Ling...
I feel so happy...
after hearing those words!
I want to know.
the real reason behind Zilu's accident
My lord! I'm finally able to see you!
There isn't anything unusual..
in Zilu's room.

This is the bathing room where Zilu almost drowned.
I've heard that within this Palace, other than the King and his wives, only Lord Ling has his own bathing room.
This bathtub is so shallow How could he have drowned?
Did Zilu fall into the water from here?

THIS TIME...
DID YOU GET LOST AGAIN?
Lord Ling!
I-
I DIDN'T...!

DID YOU COME TO SERVE ME...
BECAUSE OF THAT SERVANT WHO HAD AN ACCIDENT?
OH, MY...
ANOTHER CURIOUS AND NOSY PERSON!
What should I do?
What can I use as an excuse?
THE OTHER SERVANT'S ACCIDENT...
WAS ALSO CAUSED BY HIS OVERLY INQUISITIVE NATURE.

THERE-
FORE,
IT WAS I WHO
DROWNED HIM.
LET ME
TELL YOU
BLUNTLY!
I
PERSONALLY
...
THREW
HIM INTO
THE
WATER.
TO NOT
HAVE LOST
HIS LIFE.
HE IS
RATHER
FORTUNATE
...

Why... did he do it?
I...
BROUGHT THIS MISHAP UPON ZILU.
Zilu,
The Lord Ling whom you've always wanted to serve with all your heart..
WHY...?
BUT...
THAT ACTUALLY LED TO YOU HURTING HIM!
TO STAY NEAR YOU,
AND TO TAKE CARE OF YOU.
I TOLD HIM...

LORD CHAMBER-LAIN!
YOU'RE TOO—
THERE WILL BE MORE INNOCENT PEOPLE
WHO WILL DIE BECAUSE OF ME.
DO YOU WANT TO BE ONE OF THEM?
LEAVE NOW!
I DON'T NEED A SERVANT AS IGNORANT AS YOU.
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND ANYTHING,
YET YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Hmph...
You sure are strange!
You dare to speak to me that way
AND I DON'T WANT TO SERVE A PERSON LIKE YOU EITHER!

What he did to Zilu is unforgivable!
Several days have passed.
I keep avoiding Lord Ling
But what's even stranger is myself...
Why do I care about that brat's words?
Lord Ling..
also ignores my existence.

Perhaps, other than wanting to investigate Zilu's accident,
I alsa wish to clear those rumors about Lord Ling.
But all of my attempts..
only bring unnecessary disappointment.
ABSOLUTELY.
IS THIS REALIABLE?

Someone wants to assassinate Lord Ling?
SO, THE OTHER LORDS WANT TO ASSASSINATE LORD LING?
SHALL WE WARN THE LORD CHAMBER-LAIN?
PRETEND THAT THERE'S NOTHING WRONG.
NO.
Brother Yuanren... wants to cover up this conspiracy?

Why...
doesn't Brother Yuanren do anything to help him?
Is it because both Father and Brother Yuanren..
view Lord Ling as their enemy?
That's why they are allowing this plot to proceed?
I'm sorry, Zilu!
I can't just sit back and watch!

LET ME SEE THE LORD CHAMBER-LAIN!
I HAVE SOME-THING URGENT TO TELL HIM!
YOU'RE NOT HIS SERVANT ANYMORE!
LORD CHAMBER-LAIN?
RELEASE HIM!
LORD CHAMBER-LAIN...

PLEASE BE CAREFUL.
AT LEAST, LEAVE THIS PLACE FOR NOW!
ASSASSINATE ME?
YOU MUST HAVE HEARD SOME SORT OF RUMOR!
HOW CAN YOU PROVE ITS CREDIBILITY?
BESIDES, WHY WOULD YOU TELL ME THIS?
YOU'RE NOT MY SERVANT ANYMORE.
EVEN IF I'M NO LONGER YOUR SERVANT,
I STILL HOPE THAT YOU WOULD VALUE YOUR OWN LIFE!

DO YOU SUGGEST THAT I RUN AWAY?
WHERE COULD I HIDE?
WELL, PLEASE GO SOMEWHERE SAFE FOR NOW!
OKAY!
LET'S RUN AWAY TOGETHER!
TO-GETHER?!

WE ARE GOING TO A PLACE WHERE THOSE PEOPLE DARE NOT VENTURE INTO.
MY LORD? WHERE ARE WE GOING?
THIS IS...
A PLACE WHERE RECKLESS INTRUSION LEADS TO DEATH.

IT'S YOU AGAIN...
TRAITOR!

I DON'T BELIEVE THESE PROPHECIES.
HMPH!
EVEN THE EVIL SPIRITS WON'T FORGIVE YOU!
YOU'VE DECEIVED THE WORLD AND SEDUCED THE KING!
FATE HAS REVEALED TO ME THAT YOUR END IS NEAR....
IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN THEM, WHY DO YOU KEEP RUNNING HERE!
This is a sacred shrine!
This is...
ONLY THE HIGH PRIESTESS'S RESIDENCE IS THE MOST TRANQUIL!
High Priestess? I think I've heard Brother Yuanren mentioning her before.
There is a sacred shrine in the Palace, and the High Priestess is in charge of everything there

But now,
STOP TOUCHING THINGS!
Ah! I broke it
LEAVE THIS PLACE! I HAVE AN IMPORTANT CEREMONY TO PERFORM!
The High Priestess seems to be friends with Lord Ling
AND WHO'S THIS PERSON?
The High Priestess predicts everything within the Palace.
She's even invited to read omens when the King goes on a war campaign.
THIS IS A VERY RARE SERVANT WHO IS WORRIED THAT I MAY BE ASSASSINATED.
The Prime Minister has to pay respects towards her, too.
REALLY? THERE IS A PERSON WHO WORRIES ABOUT YOUR LIFE?
NO! I'M NOT...

SINCE HE IS YOUR SERVANT, I'LL MAKE AN EXCEPTION AND ALLOW HIM TO STAY.

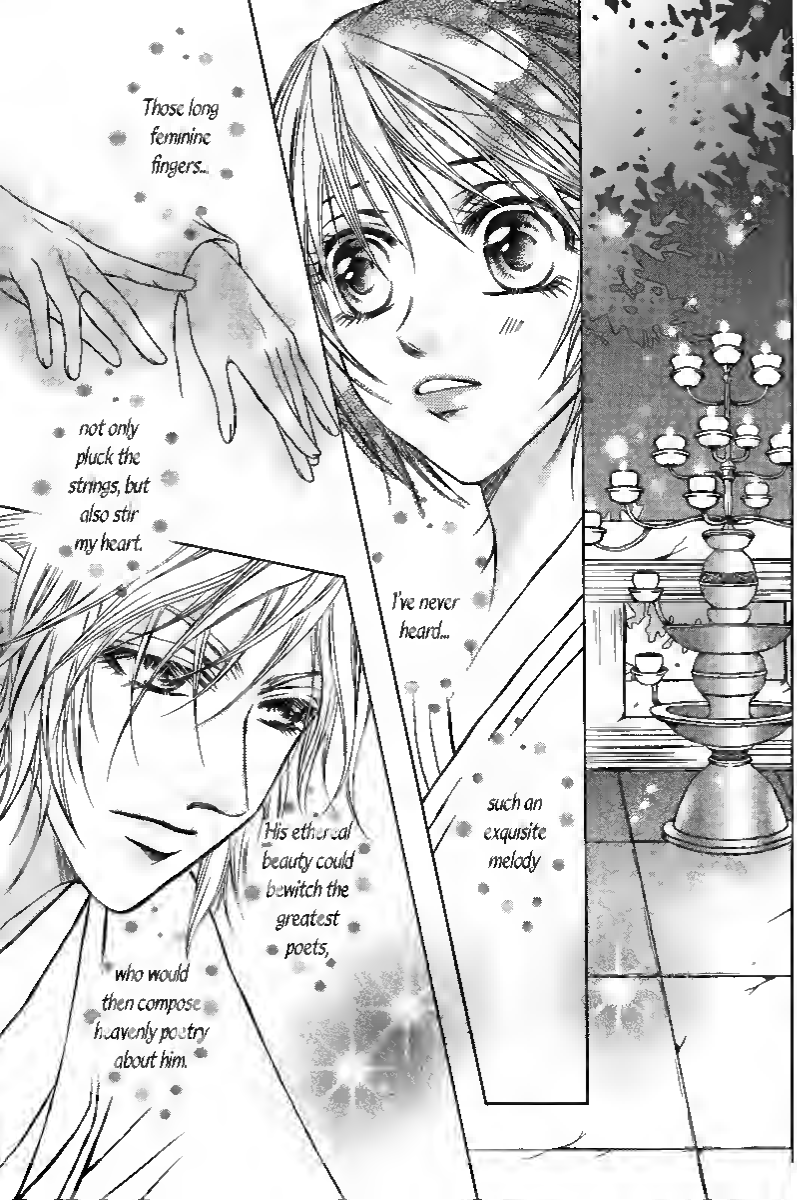
I'M NOT HIS SERVANT...

How come...

HIGH PRIESTESS!

I feel like I've been deceived?

I still feel that...
Will Lord Ling really avoid the assassination attempt in here?
I ended up serving Lord Ling like his servant
Ultimately
He requested sake
This is also a frightening place


Those long feminine fingers...
not only pluck the strings, but also stir my heart.
I've never heard...
such an exquisite melody
His ethereal beauty could bewitch the greatest poets,
who would then compose heavenly poetry about him.

AH!
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?
This is..
the Lord Ling, unmatched by the countless ladies in the seraglio
in King Xun's Scarlet Palace.
I HAVE BROUGHT YOU SAKE.
PUT IT DOWN!
How could I admit...
that I was also captivated by his celestial beauty for a moment...?

MOST PEOPLE DARE NOT APPROACH THIS SACRED SHRINE,
SO IT IS SERENE AND DISCREET.
IF I WANT TO TAKE A BREAK FROM THE MUNDANE MATTERS OF THE PALACE,
I COME HERE.
EVEN THE KING DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT THIS PLACE.
EVEN THE KING?
NIGHT HAS FALLEN. DO YOU WANT TO RETURN TO YUANREN'S RESIDENCE?
AH! YES...
THEN PLEASE BID FAREWELL TO THE HIGH PRIESTESS,
AND YOU MAY TAKE YOUR LEAVE.

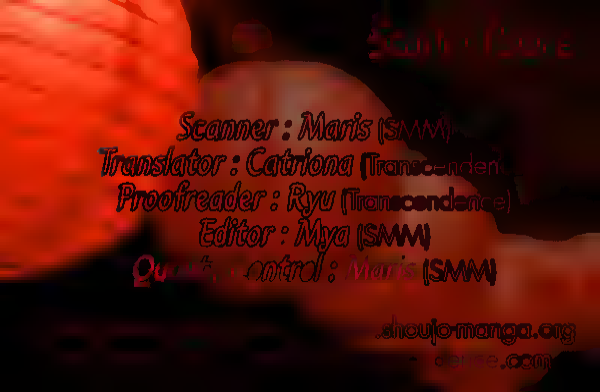
SILENCE!
HIGH PRIESTESS ...
HIGH PRIESTESS ...

I...
Why do I feel...
so drowsy.
Is the High Priestess... reading an omen?
I shouldn't disturb her, so I'll wait quietly.
What a mystifying aura...
accompanied by a strange fragrance.

LINGYU!
YOU KNOW THAT WHEN I COMMUNICATE WITH THE GODS,
IT IS FORBIDDEN FOR ANYONE TO INTERRUPT.
DO YOU WANT YOUR SERVANT TO DIE?
ISN'T THAT ONLY RESTRICTED TO MALES?
SO...
YOU KNEW ALL ALONG ..

...THAT THIS CHILD...
IS A GIRL.
WHEN I WAS AT QI KINGDOM, MY TRADE FORCED ME TO DISGUISE MYSELF AS A GIRL AND DECEIVE BUYERS.
HOW COULD SHE TRICK ME?
YOU WANT ME TO CONCEAL...
THE FACT THAT YOU'RE NOT A EUNUCH.
NOW, DO YOU ALSO WANT ME TO HELP YOU KEEP THIS SECRET?
NO.

THIS IS JING YUANREN'S SECRET.
THIS ISN'T MY SECRET.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第六回 亡國後宮

Chapter 6: Seraglio of the Vanquished

WILL YOU EXPOSE THEM?
NO.
BECAUSE IT IS TOO AMUSING.
JING YUANREN'S SERVANT NINGHU...
IS A GIRL.
Jing Yuanren...
surely knows this.

NINGHU...
REALLY IS NAIVE.
I PROBABLY ...
COULDN'T EVEN COUNT HOW MANY PEOPLE WANT TO ASSASSINATE ME!
BUT THERE ARE STILL MANY
WHO WOULD INFORM ME.
THIS IS THE CHARM OF POLITICAL POWER
PRIME MINISTER ALREADY SENT OUT MEN TO TELL ME
ABOUT THIS ASSASSINATION PLOT.
BUT IT IS UNEXPECTED ...
THAT SOMEONE WOULD TRULY CARE ABOUT MY LIFE OR DEATH.

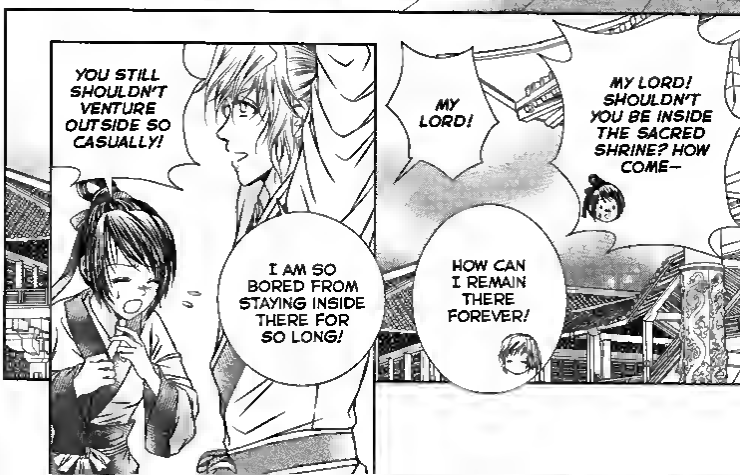
SURPRISED
ARE YOU AWAKE?
LORD CHAMBER-LAIN?

HOW DID I...
YOU PROBABLY FELL ASLEEP FROM EXHAUSTION!
I ORDERED SOMEONE TO ESCORT YOU BACK.
YUANREN MUST BE FERVENTLY SEARCHING FOR YOU.
EH?
HE... REALLY TREASURES YOU!
I dimly remember...
that he wanted me to see the High Priestess.
Why did I fall asleep?

Still, I shouldn't have gone to see Lord Ling.
His actions have never ceased to surprise me.
He said... that Yuanren really treasures me?
What does that mean?
BROTHER YUANREN.
ARE YOU READY?
BROTHER YUANREN... CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING?
WHAT IS IT?
YES, I UNDERSTAND!
WE HAVE TO VISIT MANY PLACES TODAY, SO WE SHOULD DEPART EARLY!

HAVE YOU DECIDED ON
LORD LING'S NEW SERVANT YET?
NOT AT THE MOMENT.
EH?
HE IS DISPLEASED
WITH ALL OF THE CANDIDATES.
HE WILL PROBABLY MAKE THE FINAL SELECTION HIMSELF!
Lord Ling...
wants to select a servant himself
How wonderful it would be...
if Zilu were still here.

LORD CHAMBER-LAIN?
SHH!
EH?


YOU STILL SHOULDN'T VENTURE OUTSIDE SO CASUALLY!
I AM SO BORED FROM STAYING INSIDE THERE FOR SO LONG!
MY LORD!
HOW CAN I REMAIN THERE FOREVER!
MY LORD! SHOULDN'T YOU BE INSIDE THE SACRED SHRINE? HOW COME—

IF THEY COULD KILL ME SO EASILY,
THEN THEY WOULD NOT HATE ME SO MUCH.
HONESTLY/ DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT I WOULD BE ASSASSI-NATED?
WELL...
BUT-
IT WILL BE FINE.
Lord Ling...
LET'S GO...
Hatred?

IF YOU HAVE A SERVANT, THEN AT LEAST HE COULD HELP YOU TO NOTICE SUCH DISTURBANCES.
SHOULDN'T YOU... DECIDE ON A SERVANT SOON?
LORD LING...
I DECIDED ON MY SERVANT AGES AGO!
A SERVANT?
IT'S YOU, NINGHU!

PLEASE DON'T JOKE WITH ME!
YOU WANTED ME TO LEAVE!
And I also said disrespectful things
THERE ARE SO MANY SERVANTS IN THE PALACE. IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE ME!
MY LORD...
BECAUSE...
YOU FEEL THAT YUANREN IS BETTER IN COMPARISON?
EH?
IS IT BETTER TO STAY WITH YUANREN...
THAN TO SERVE ME?

I AM A...
THE MORE PRECIOUS SOMETHING IS TO OTHERS, THE MORE I DESIRE IT.
THE LESS OTHERS WISH TO RELINQUISH IT, THE MORE I WANT TO STEAL IT.
RAPACIOUS MAN.
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT!
I WOULDN'T DARE TO—
NINGHU...
LET ME TELL YOU ANOTHER SECRET!

How could this be?!
Lord Ling...
depicts me as an object!
MY LORD!
THE MORE YUANREN WOULD PROTECT IT WITH EVERYTHING HE HAS...
THE LESS I WANT TO LET IT GO.

IN THE END, YOU COULDN'T LAST AND ESCAPED AFTER A FEW DAYS!
Yet you still want to be Lord Ling's servant?
ZIJI! DON'T SAY SUCH THINGS!
WELL...
She was summoned.

SO, THEN...?
DO YOU KNOW WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED TO THAT OTHER SERVANT?
I... DON'T KNOW.
BUT YOU WERE AT LORD LING'S PLACE THESE PAST SEVERAL DAYS,
SO YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN SOME CLUES, MORE OR LESS!
CLUES?
Lord Ling pushed Zilu into the water himself.
I couldn't...
tell anyone the truth.
PRIN-CESS!
I HAVE JUST RECEIVED SOME NEWS!
REALLY?

HIS HIGHNESS, THE KING, HAS BEEN...
WOUNDED AT NANYU KINGDOM!
PRINCESS XIANGRUI...
IS THAT SO...
EVEN THOUGH HE WAS VICTORIOUS AGAINST NANYU KINGDOM,
HE WAS WOUNDED AS A RESULT.
ALL OF THE LORDS IN THE GREAT HALL ARE VERY CONCERNED!
IS HE IN A CRITICAL CONDITION?
NO ONE KNOWS FOR SURE AS OF NOW.

Princess Xiangrui?
Ziji?
They don't appear to be worried?
Why do they have such expressions?
THEY WON'T WORRY AT ALL.
THEY MUST BE DISTRESSED BECAUSE THE KING HAS BEEN WOUNDED!
HOW COULD SUCH A THOUGHT OCCUR TO ME!

LADY MINGHE!
IT SEEMS...
THAT YUANREN HASN'T TOLD YOU ANYTHING!
INITIALLY THEY WERE ALL WOMEN OF ROYALTY.
AMONGST THE KING'S WIVES IN THE SERAGLIO, ONLY TWO ARE FROM DING KINGDOM.
OUR KING ANNIHILATED THEIR KINGDOMS, CAPTURED THEM, AND APPOINTED THEM AS WIVES.
THE OTHER WIVES AND ZIJI ARE ALL FROM FOREIGN KINGDOMS.

They became part of the King's seraglio...
as the King's war trophy?
The pain of losing their kingdoms?
THEY PROBABLY ALL HOLD GRUDGES AGAINST THE KING!
THEY ALL BEAR THE PAIN OF LOSING THEIR KINGDOMS IN THEIR HEARTS.
IN OTHER WORDS, THEY ARE ONLY WAR TROPHIES FROM VANQUISHED KINGDOMS.
THE LADIES IN THIS SERAGLIO...
ARE MERELY DECORATIVE ORNAMENTS.
HE STILL WON'T PAY US ANY ATTENTION.
HOWEVER, EVEN THOUGH LADY YI AND I ARE FROM THIS KINGDOM,

Lady Minghe also bears our clan's expectation.
She has successfully gained the highest position amongst the Jing daughters.
Yet...
LADY MINGHE...
THEREFORE, I DON'T HAVE FAITH THAT YUANREN'S PLOT
WILL BE FRUITFUL.
IT IS STILL NOT TOO LATE TO LEAVE THIS SERAGLIO.
HURRY AND GO!

Every remaining force of the vanquished kingdoms...
is also secretly scrutinizing the development
The information about the King's injuries at Nanyu Kingdom.
Immediately aroused disturbances inside the Palace.
Does anyone know anything of the King's injuries?
I don't know
Because the King has no heirs...
If something happens to the King
Shh! Don't you want to live?
There is much apprehension in the seraglio.
The King does not have a Queen, and he didn't nominate a prince..
If...

Despite the chaos in the Palace...
there is only one thing that is of my concern.
MY LORD!
PRINCESS XIANGRUI HAS SUMMONED ME TO HER RESIDENCE.
I WILL RETURN PROMPTLY.
OH, REALLY?
I am sorry... Brother Yuanren!
I lied to you...

Because I am still worried...
if Lord Ling, whose heart only cares for the King...
could endure such impact.
LORD CHAMBER-LAIN?

LORD CHAMBER-LAIN!
HOW...
COULD I BE OKAY?
ARE YOU OKAY?

IF SOMETHING HAPPENS TO MY KING...
I WILL NOT BE ABLE TO CONTINUE LIVING MY LIFE.
WITHOUT THE KING...
BE IT A NEW KING OR A FAMILIAR LORD,
IT IS WITHOUT A DOUBT THAT HE WILL IMMEDIATELY EXECUTE ME!
I WILL LOSE ALL OF MY SUPPORT.
NEVER WILL I BE LORD CHAMBERLAIN AGAIN.
THESE THOUGHTS...
LORD CHAMBER-LAIN!

EH?
THEY PROBABLY THINK THAT I MUST BE SHIVERING FROM FEAR!
...ONLY EXIST IN OTHER PEOPLE'S IMAGINATIONS.
SERI-OUSLY!
I FEEL SO AMUSED EVERY TIME.
WHENEVER I WATCH HOW YOU WORRY,
LORD CHAMBER-LAIN!
WHETHER THE KING IS WITH ME OR NOT,
THERE IS NOTHING FOR ME TO FEAR.

MY KING...
WILL NEVER LEAVE MY SIDE.
HE WOULD NOT BETRAY ME AND EMBRACE DEATH.
Lord Ling...

No matter what the circumstance is, or what misfortune happens..
Lord Ling is adamantly loyal to the King..
This unfaltering belief that even death cannot waver...
led me to feel an emotion that I have never felt before.
As expected..
MY LORD, PLEASE TAKE CARE. FAREWELL
IF THAT IS THE CASE, THEN MAY I TAKE MY LEAVE NOW.

ARE YOU ANGRY?
EH?
NO, I AM NOT...
This obscure, painful sensation...
Has Lord Ling seen through me?
This unwillingness to hear about the King from his mouth...

NINGHU...
YOU ARE INCAPABLE OF LYING TO ME.

YOU ARE JEALOUS...

IF HE IS NOT A PERSON WHOM I FANCY,
THEN I DON'T NEED ANYONE TO SERVE ME.
WHEN I SEEK A SERVANT,
IT IS NOT ENOUGH FOR THE SERVANT TO ONLY LIKE ME.

I WILL TREASURE YOU...
MORE DEEPLY THAN YUANREN EVER WOULD.
LORD CHAMBERLAIN?
STAY WITH ME!

LORD CHAMBER-LAIN...!

IF HE IS NOT..
A PERSON WHOM I FANCY..
Lord Ling's voice..
could make a person lose her rationality
But.. My secret cannot be discovered!
MY LORD, PLEASE STOP!

MY LORD! EVEN THOUGH I AM A EUNUCH,
PLEASE TREAT ME AS A REAL BOY!
I AM LORD JING'S SERVANT!
PLEASE FIND ANOTHER WHO IS MORE SUITED TO BE YOUR SERVANT!
I WILL TAKE MY LEAVE NOW!

AS A REAL BOY?
NINGHU...
YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW HOW TO LIE...
Phew..
She escaped me again..

Was I jealous?
If I were jealous...
I should be jealous because Lord Ling possesses the King's affection!
But...
Am I jealous over the King?

Lord Ling, whose heart only cares for the King...
My heart...
Is only playing around with my heart.
has never been so confused and lost.
I seem to still feel his warmth from back then..

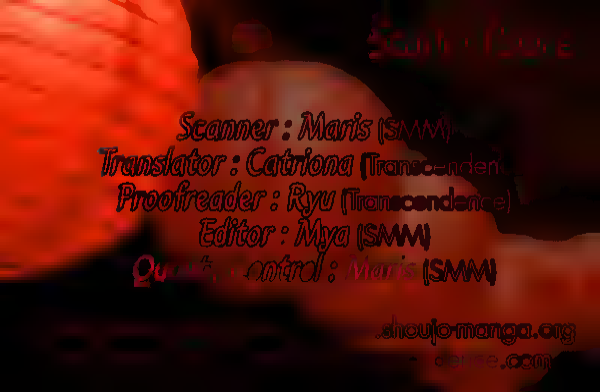
IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO DRESS.
MISS NINGHU.
BROTHER YUANREN!
I CAN CHANGE INTO MY CLOTHES BY MYSELF!
I AM ALREADY ACCUSTOMED TO BEING YOUR SERVANT,
SO I CAN'T TROUBLE YOU ANY MORE WITH SUCH TRIVIAL THINGS!
TOMOR-ROW...
THEN...
PLEASE REST EARLY, BROTHER YUANREN.

BROTHER YUANREN?

THE KING IS NOT ONLY CALCULATIVE IN MIND, BUT IS ALSO SUSPICIOUS IN NATURE.
ANYTHING PRESENTED TO HIM MUST ABSOLUTELY BE WITHOUT FLAWS.
ANYTHING THAT HIS EYES MAY SEE
MUST BE PERFECT.
THERE-FORE...
THIS IS UNACCEPT-ABLE.
I HOPE THAT YOU DIDN'T FORGET...
THAT YOU COME INTO THIS PALACE TO BE THE FUTURE QUEEN.

TH-THIS IS-...
YOU DON'T NEED TO EXPLAIN.
I KNOW EVERYTHING
THAT IS HAPPENING IN YOUR LIFE
Everything that is happening in my life?
Was Brother YuanRen...
spying on me this entire time?

Only later did I realize...
For that purpose...
I must absolutely be without flaws?
that Brother Yuanren...
that his cerulean eyes...
have never left me.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第七回 改變命運的相遇
Chapter 7: The Fateful Encounter

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS FOLLOW MY SCHEME.
BUT PLEASE DO NOT BE TROUBLED.
YOU ARE EXCESSIVELY NAIVE.
PALACE AFFAIRS ARE COMPLICATED, AS ARE PEOPLE'S HEARTS.
All I have to do is to obey Brother Yuanren?

BECOMING THE KING'S QUEEN
IS THE ONLY PLACE FOR YOU TO GO.
RIGHT NOW, TO THE JING CLAN,
YOU ARE A DECEASED PERSON.
PLEASE INFORM ME OF YOUR TRUE DESTINATION IN THE FUTURE.
PLEASE TREASURE EVERYTHING THAT YOU HAVE.
IT IS FOR YOUR OWN BENEFIT THAT I SERVE YOUR BATHING AND DRESSING NEEDS.
IF YOU FALL IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE OTHER THAN THE KING,
PLEASE BURY THAT LOVE INSIDE YOUR HEART!

PLEASE RETIRE TO BED EARLY!
AS LONG AS YOU COOPERATE WITH MY DEMANDS,
YOUR HEART WILL REMAIN FREE.
Suddenly I remembered..
Lord Ling's words...
YUANREN REALLY TREASURES YOU!
Does this meticulous tending
only serve to spy upon me?

It doesn't matter whom I fall in love with,
so long as I become the Queen
This is the first time...
that I've seen Brother Yuanren's eyes turn so terribly unforgiving.
In this Palace...
becoming the Queen is more important than anything else...

I did not see Lord Ling...
during these few days.
HAVE YOU FINISHED THE PREPAR-ATIONS?
YES.
THEN LET'S DEPART.
Brother Yuanren... has fallen back into his usual self.
The expression that I saw on that day did not appear again
But my heart
continues to rise and fall...
unable to be mollified.

I really want..
to see Lord Ling...
High Priestess?
I DID NOT EXPECT TO MEET YOU,
QUEEN'S CHAMBERLAIN, JING YUANREN!
NOR DID I EXPECT TO SEE THE HIGH PRIESTESS IN THE SERAGLIO.
THE KING'S PARENTS SUMMONED ME HERE
SO THAT I CAN REPORT MY PROPHECIES ON THE KING.

THE SACRED SHRINE IS VERY OCCUPIED AND CHAOTIC BECAUSE OF THE KING.
I WISH TO BORROW YOUR SERVANT TEMPORARILY TO HELP ME WITH MY DUTIES.
HIGH PRIESTESS?
PRAYING FOR THE KING IS A CRUCIAL MATTER.
I BELIEVE THAT YOU CANNOT REJECT MY REQUEST.
LITTLE SERVANT, FOLLOW ME FOR NOW!

HIGH PRIESTESS...
I REALLY AM CLUELESS ABOUT PRAYERS AND SUCH...
I KNOW.
IT'S JUST THAT A VERY IRRITATING THING IS LOITERING AROUND IN MY RESIDENCE,
AND WHATEVER I DO, I CAN'T DRIVE IT AWAY.
SO YOUR NAME IS NINGHU?
I THINK THAT ONLY YOU CAN SERVE HIM.

HIGH PRIESTESS?
GET IN THERE!
HE IS NOW YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.
This is the mysterious Sacred Shrine...
According to Lord Lung, even the King does not know of its existence.

So...
Lord Ungyu..
The person whom the High Priestess wants me to serve...

These linen sheets...
Letters from Nanyu Kingdom!
LORD LINGYU?
They are all replies to Lord Ling's letters,
but none of them has addressed the King's current health.
Even though Lord Ling said that he is not concerned,
he is actually more worried about the King than anyone else!

Lord Ling...
can only bear this burden all alone.
Is it only in here
that he sets his troubles free momentarily?
MY LORD...
MY LORD, PLEASE GO INSIDE!
YOU WILL CATCH A COLD HERE.

Lord Lingyu?
MY LORD!

NINGHU...?
I...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

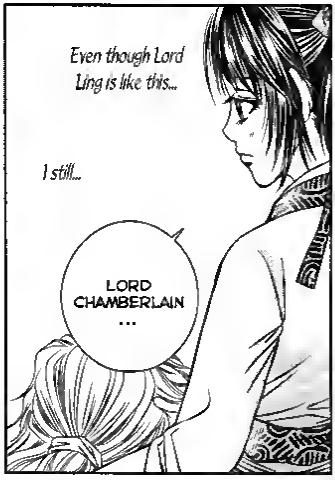
Lord Ling...
has resumed his usual self.
I THOUGHT THAT I COULD FIND SOME PEACE ALONE IN HERE!
THE HIGH PRIESTESS ...
DID SHE SUMMON YOU HERE?
YOU ARE REALLY OBEDIENT.
But at that moment...
Lord Ling...
showed a bewildered visage.

SINCE YOU ARE HERE,
STAY BEHIND AND BE MY COMPANION.
THERE IS NO NEED.
I HAVE PREPARED SOME TEA TO HELP YOU TO SOBER UP...
I FEEL... SOMEWHAT WEARY.
MY LORD?
I suppose. that this weariness comes from within his heart!

Since the moment I entered the Palace and agreed to follow Brother Yuanren's conspiracy,
I realized that I have given up my liberty to determine my own destiny as the price.
DON'T FORGET,
YOU CAME INTO THIS PALACE TO BE THE FUTURE QUEEN.
Lord Ling...
If I should fall in love with someone other than the King...
I can only bury that flower blossom deep inside my heart!

want to remain beside him.
PLEASE ALLOW ME...
TO BE YOUR SERVANT.

His perplexing eyes...
His cruel ways...


Even though Lord Ling is like this...
I still...
LORD CHAMBERLAIN ...

MY LORD?
Is he mocking me?
Did he fall asleep?
I rejected this position before,
but now I want to be his servant of my own free will...
He is sleeping so soundly...

It no longer matters...
Brother Yuanren will certainly be furious!
But...
I don't want to bury this love inside my heart.
I want to.
be with the one I love...

YOUR MAJESTY,
ABOUT YOUR WOUND...
DO YOU WANT TO HIDE IT EVEN FROM LORD CHAMBERLAIN LINGYU?
I WILL INFORM HIM OF IT ONCE WE RETURN TO THE CAPITAL!
AS IT IS NOW, NO ONE NEEDS TO KNOW OF IT.
Border of Ding Kindom

Six years ago..
of the time I spent in Qi kingdom, unable to return to my own kingdom.
ZHAOLIN,
HOW MANY MORE DAYS UNTIL WE REACH THE CAPITAL?
WE CAN CROSS THE BORDER INTO OUR KINGDOM TODAY.
WE WILL ARRIVE AT THE PALACE IN THREE DAYS.
EVERY TIME I RETURN FROM A WAR EXPEDITION,
I ALWAYS REMEMBER AT OUR KINGDOM'S BORDER...

PRINCE QI IS TOO MUCH!
HE DARES TO BRAND THE SIGN OF CRIME UPON YOUR FOREHEAD!
YOU ARE THE NOBLE SON OF THE KING OF DING!
TEACHER, THERE IS NO NEED TO CRY.
MY FACE MERELY HAS ONE MORE TINY SCAR.
HOW CAN I NOT BE SADDENED...
The noble son who bears the royal blood of the King of Ding...
is now only a hostage chained to Qi Kingdom.
THE SON OF THE KING OF DING...
When I departed from Ding Kingdom, it was like an exile sentence...
Not many people bid me farewell. Even Father did not show up.

But I am so powerless now.
How can I bring about changes?
PRINCE...
PRINCE QI DEMANDS THAT YOU SHOULD GO TO HIS RESIDENCE AND PAY HIM RESPECT...
WHAT?
Teacher told me to not relinquish my hopes...
because Father still might summon me back to our kingdom.
DOES HE WANT TO HUMILIATE OUR PRINCE AGAIN?
BUT—
TELL HIM THAT I WILL GO TOMORROW.
PRINCE!
I WANT TO TAKE A WALK NOW.

Am I...
any different from
those commoners?

I will build a kingdom that is hundreds of times stronger than Ding Kingdom!
I can change everyone's fate!
PRINCE!
PRINCE DING IS RETURNING?
I HEARD THAT HE WILL BECOME THE NEW KING OF DING.
HOW UNEXPECTED ...
SIR!
CAN YOU BUY ME?
He is a charlatan who disguises himself as a woman in the market.
He is a lowly commoner from Qi Kingdom.
His ranking is so low that he could never escape his caste.

can forever change
this person's fate...
At least...
the me
right now...

Palace of Ding Kingdom
HE IS PRINCE XUN...
THE QUEEN DOWAGER WANTS HIM TO RETURN AND TAKE THE THRONE.
WHAT CAN A YOUNG, USELESS BRAT DO?
WHAT YOU SAY IS VERY TRUE, DUKE!
NONE OF THE LORDS WILL LISTEN TO HIM!
...

YOU NO LONGER HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT FOOD AND CLOTHING IN DING KINGDOM.
WITH THESE,
I GIVE YOU TWO THOUSAND MONEY PIECES,
A MANSION AND ITS SURROUNDING LANDS.
YOU CAN LEAVE YOUR LIFE AS A LOWLY COMMONER,
AND BE A CHARLATAN NO MORE.
I AM MOST GRATEFUL FOR YOUR GENEROSITY.
I WILL LEAD AN HONEST LIFE.

THE QUEEN DOWAGER REALLY IS FOOLISH!
YOU ARE MORE FIT TO BE THE KING OF DING!
SHE WILL REGRET HER DECISION!
PASS THIS ORDER ON!
NO ONE CAN CALL THAT BRAT "YOUR MAJESTY" OR "KING"!
I UNDERSTAND!
YOU...!
HOW DARE YOU!
DO YOU KNOW WHOM YOU HAVE JUST RUN INTO?

Is... Is this person a girl or a boy?
I HAVE OFFENDED THE MOST RESPECTED MAN IN ALL OF DING.
I DESERVE TO DIE...
YOU ARE THAT PERSON FROM QI WHO WAS WITH PRINCE XUN!
WHY ARE YOU HERE?
I JUST RECEIVED A FEW MEAGER ACRES OF LAND AND AM ABOUT TO LEAVE THE PALACE.
IF YOU ARE WILLING TO KEEP ME...
I WILL SERVE YOU WITH ALL MY HEART!
DING KINGDOM IS A FOREIGN PLACE TO ME!
I AM WITHOUT FAMILY OR FRIENDS...
I FOLLOWED THE PRINCE ALL THE WAY FROM QI KINGDOM,
BUT NOW I AM DISCARDED FROM THE PALACE LIKE AN OBJECT!

MY LORD!
HAVE YOU HEARD THE NEWS?
THE DUKE IS ABOUT TO BE EXILED OUT OF DING KINGDOM!
UNCLE?
THEY FOUND LETTERS OF TREASON IN HIS MANSION,
AS WELL AS MANY TREASURES FROM QI KINGDOM.
THIS IS A LIE!
I DIDN'T CONSPIRE WITH QI KINGDOM!
THAT EVIDENCE IS FALSIFIED!

YOU, HOWEVER, ACCEPTED BRIBES FROM QI KINGDOM!
IT IS ABSOLUTELY FORBIDDEN TO OWN THOSE TREASURES FROM QI KINGDOM.
I SEE HOW IT IS...
HOW CONNIVING YOU ARE!
SO IT WAS ALL A PART OF YOUR SCHEME!
FROM THE VERY START, YOU WANTED TO FRAME ME!
WHERE IS THAT BASTARD FROM QI?

And according to the Queen Dowager's decree...
only he can be the legitimate King of Ding.
Believing that the Duke will certainly ascend to the throne...
all of the lords supported him.
What do we do now...?
I WON'T EVER FORGIVE YOU!
But now he is exiled...
We have no choice but to...
Even though he is only a thirteen year old boy..

WE HAVE NOT YET SALUTED TO YOU EVER SINCE YOUR RETURN FROM QI KINGDOM...
PLEASE ACCEPT OUR HUMBLE RECEPTIONS!
...lower our heads to him!
LONG LIVE THE KING!

MY LORD! LINGYU HAS ARRIVED AS YOU SUMMONED...

AT THE DUKE'S MANSION, I FABRICATED THE TREACHEROUS LETTERS AND FORGED THE SUPPOSEDLY BRIBED TREASURES...
THAT'S CORRECT. I DID DO THEM.
NOW THAT HE IS EXILED,
YOU CAN BECOME THE KING OF DING WITHOUT MUCH RESISTANCE.
YOU...
DID ALL THOSE THINGS!
I DON'T NEED TO RELY ON THOSE DEVIOUS METHODS!
THIS IS NOT HOW THE KING OF DING SHOULD ACT!
THE DUKE IS MY UNCLE BY BLOOD. HOW CAN I FRAME HIM SO!

YOU ARE A PERSON FROM QI KINGDOM, SO YOU CAN EASILY WRITE THOSE LETTERS...
AND YOU USED MY GRANTS TO BUY THOSE PRECIOUS QI TREASURES, AM I RIGHT?
BUT...
HOW DID YOU TRANSPORT THOSE ITEMS INTO MY UNCLE'S PRIVATE BEDCHAMBER?
Could it be... that you..
MY LORD...
I, AN UNTOUCHABLE*, DID THESE THINGS.
IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU.

(T/N: An Untouchable is a outcast, so named because he is considered too foul to be touched by regular people.)

ALLOW ME TO COMPLETE...
THE THINGS THAT YOU CANNOT OR WILL NOT DO...
NO MATTER HOW HORRID THEY MAY BE!
THEREFORE,
PLEASE ALLOW ME TO STAY BY YOUR SIDE!

DURING MY TIME AS A HOSTAGE OF QI KINGDOM...
EVEN THOUGH I AM THE SON OF THE KING OF DING, I AM WITHOUT POWER OR MIGHT.
SO AT THAT TIME I WISHED TO FIND AN EXTREMELY UNDERPRIVILEGED PERSON...
AND ALTER HIS FATE WITH MY OWN HANDS.

And then...
I ended up meeting...
a person who has changed my own fate.

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Chapter 8: Assassination Within the Palace
第八回 王城暗殺

SO, YOU PROMISED LINGYU...
THAT YOU WOULD BE HIS SERVANT AGAIN?
...YES.
Will Brother Yuanren. be angry?

I...
HE DROVE YOU AWAY THAT TIME,
AND YOU DON'T WANT TO STAY NEAR HIM YOURSELF.
WON'T YOU REGRET YOUR DECISION AGAIN?
IF MY LADY INSISTS,
THEN I WILL ASSIST YOU TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY.
Eh?

BUT...
MY LADY, PLEASE REMEMBER...
OUR CONSPIRACY.
I... OF COURSE I WON'T FORGET!
RATHER THAN WASTING YOUR HEART...
ON LINGYU.
PLEASE BECOME THE QUEEN OF DING,

THEN...
I SHALL BELIEVE IN YOUR PROMISE.

The scent of a girl..
cannot be concealed.
Only she is able to..
become the Queen..
No matter what,
Only Ningyu..
Lingyu..
is trickier than I would've imagined.

Like I anticipated..
As long as I do not abandon my ambition to become Queen,
Brother Yuanren is appeased.
But..
That time, Brother Yuanren...
made me so nervous.
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT?

LORD LING?
HOW COME YOU ARE DREAMING ALL THE TIME?
I WAS ONLY...
WHAT'S THIS?
I DON'T WANT YOU TO THINK ABOUT SOMEBODY ELSE AROUND ME!
Lord Ling saw through me again...
TOMORROW, MY LORD HAS AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE DOWAGER QUEEN IN THE MORNING,
A MEETING WITH THE ROYAL ADVISER AND ROYAL PHYSICIAN IN THE AFTERNOON,
AND—
I DON'T WANT TO GO ANYWHERE...
OR SEE ANYONE TOMORROW.
He is being capricious again!

OF COURSE NOT! I AM ONLY HIS SERVANT!
IS YUANREN YOUR LOVER?
NINGHU, I AM CURIOUS...
IT IS TRUE THAT LORO JING IS VERY KIND TO ME,
BUT WE DO NOT HAVE THAT SORT OF RELATION-SHIP!
Lover? Brother Yuanren?
LORD JING AND YOU ARE NOT THE SAME!
HE WILL NEVER DO ANYTHING UNSEEMLY EVEN IF WE ARE TOGETHER DAY AND NIGHT!
HE IS INDEED DIFFERENT FROM ME.
Oh, no...
What was I saying?!
SO HE ISN'T YOUR LOVER?

What was...
that damn Yuanren thinking?
THAT ONLY...
MAKES IT EVEN MORE COMPLICATED.
Lord Ling?

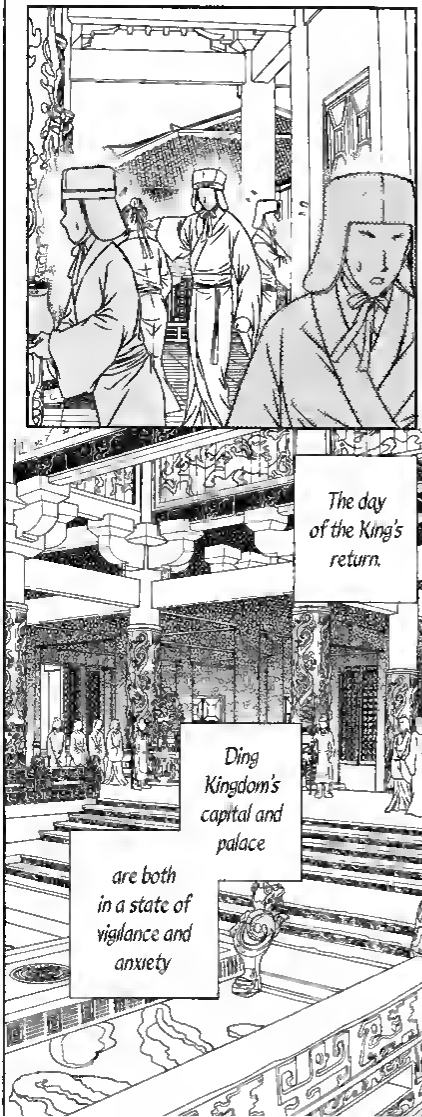
THE KING...
WILL DEFINITELY BE FINE.
LORD LING...
IF YOU CANNOT CALM YOUR HEART,
THEN PLEASE DO NOT WORRY BY YOURSELF.
AND I...
AM ALSO WORRIED ABOUT YOU!
I AM SURE THAT THE KING IS ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT YOU...

EVEN THOUGH I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANYTHING. .
I CAN STILL BE BY YOUR SIDE.
PLEASE BELIEVE IN ME,
AND ALLOW ME TO SHARE YOUR PAIN!

Even if I cannot calm my heart...
I don't need to endure my painful burden alone.
NINGHU...
YOU WERE SO ADORABLE WHEN YOU SAID THAT!
IF THAT'S THE CASE,
THEN DON'T RETURN TO YUANREN'S PLACE!
MY LORD!
PLEASE STAY AND ACCOMPANY ME TONIGHT!
MY LORD! PLEASE LET ME GO...!
DIDN'T YOU SAY THAT YOU WANT TO STAY BY MY SIDE?
WHAT...
I DIDN'T MEAN IT LIKE THAT...

IF SHE IS DISCOVERED TO BE A GIRL...
OR IF YOUR PLAN WAS EXPOSED...
YUANREN...
DID YOU LET NINGHU BECOME LINGYU'S SERVANT AGAIN?
ISN'T THAT VERY DANGEROUS?
THE KING IS ABOUT TO RETURN TO THE PALACE...
LETTING LADY NINGHU APPROACH LINGYU...
MEANS LETTING HER GET CLOSE TO THE KING.
THE CONSPIRACY ALLOWS FOR THESE FACTORS.
PLEASE DO NOT WORRY.

ALSO, YUANREN...
YOUR AIR OF JEALOUSY...
IS VERY CUTE.
DO YOU KNOW THE CONSE-QUENCE?
NINGHU IS IN LOVE WITH LINGYU!
LINGYU IS A EUNUCH.
LADY NINGHU'S FEELINGS FOR HIM ARE ONLY A YOUNG GIRL'S ADMIRATION.
AH...
I DIDN'T EXPECT THAT AFTER STAYING IN THE SERAGLIO FOR SUCH A LONG TIME...
THAT YOU STILL WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND WOMEN!


The day of the King's return.
Ding Kingdom's capital and palace
are both in a state of vigilance and anxiety
LADY MINGHE,
PLEASE DO NOT JEST THIS WAY.
HURRY! HURRY!
EVERY-THING MUST BE PREPARED!

MY LORD...
LORD CHAMBER-LAIN!
WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME TO?
I WANT TO HIDE YOU SOMEWHERE.
Huh? What does he mean?
BUT... THE KING IS RETURNING TODAY,
AND I HAVEN'T COMBED YOUR HAIR OR HELPED YOU DRESS...
I CAN DO THOSE THINGS MYSELF.

HERE WE ARE.
TIDY UP THIS PLACE.
WIPE THE TABLES AND ORNAMENTS CLEAN,
AND DO NOT LEAVE BEHIND ANY DUST.
YOU CAN FIND A MAID...
ANOTHER SECRET ROOM...
Lord Ling has so many hiding places
THIS IS A SECRET ROOM.
I CAN'T ALLOW JUST ANYONE TO COME IN HERE!
THERE ARE SO MANY OTHER ROOMS THAT YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT!

Even though Lord Ling wants me to clean this place,
the room seems to be exceptionally clean already
Where is this place...?
I can't remember the way out
The King is returning to the palace...
Lord Ling's mood is improving.
In fact, he seems to have changed into a completely new person with his happiness.
I also want to..
see the King with my own eyes...

LONG LIVE THE KING!
THE KING HAS RETURNED!

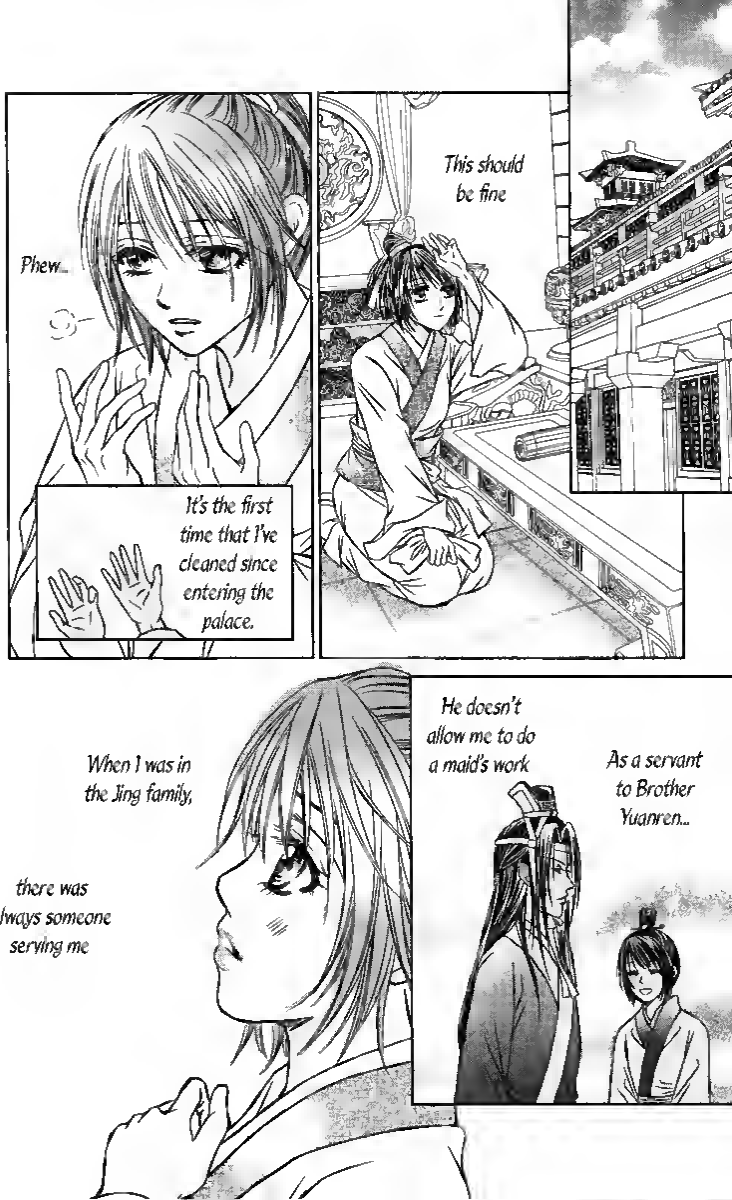
YOUR HIGH-NESS?
I HEARD THAT HE HAD FACIAL INJURIES... BUT TO THIS EXTENT...
huff
huff

TYRANT!
XUN OF DING!
TODAY IS THE DAY OF YOUR DEATH!

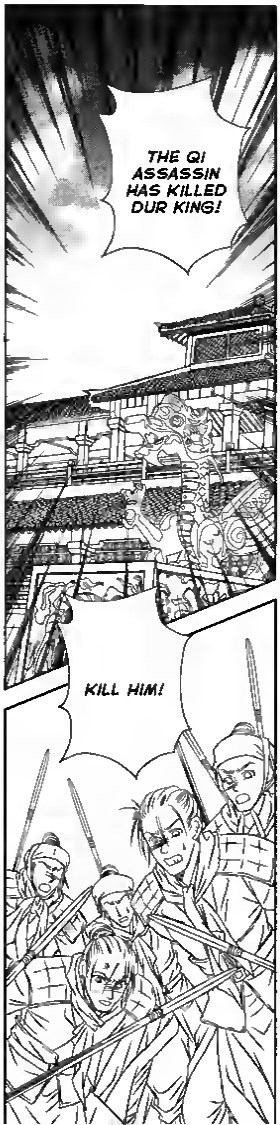
that appeared constantly in my nightmares
That...
was the scene.

LINGYU!
MY LORO!
YOU TRAITOR!
THE WARRIORS OF QI SEEK THEIR REVENGE!
MY LORO!

LORD CHAMBERLAIN, ARE YOU OKAY?
YOU ARE... ZHAO LIN?


Phew...
It's the first time that I've cleaned since entering the palace.
This should be fine
When I was in the Jing family,
there was always someone serving me
He doesn't allow me to do a maid's work
As a servant to Brother Yuanren...

No...
It's not Lord Ling!
I haven't worn...
a girl's clothing for a long time
Eh? The sound of footsteps?
Did Lord Ling come back?
No jingle of bells!



Whose powerful footsteps are those?

He said that this is a secret area...

and that people cannot come in as they wish!

ZHAO LIN...
WHY DIDN'T YOU ESCORT THE KING?
I SEE NOW...
MOVE!

LORD LING! YOU...
THAT'S OUR KING...
IF HE DIES SO EASILY,
THEN HE CANNOT BE MY KING.

SEE WHO YOU HAVE KILLED!
LOOK CARE-FULLY!
THE EXILED PRINCE JUTAN OF QI...
THE ONLY SUCCESSOR TO QI'S ROYAL THRONE.
IN THE END, QI KINGDOM HAS BEEN DESTROYED BY THE PEOPLE OF QI!
What! How could this be?!

PRINCE... PRINCE!
I DESERVE A THOUSAND DEATHS!
QI KINGDOM HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ME!
IT NO LONGER EXISTS!
I SERVE ONLY ONE LORD: MY KING XUN!

LINGYU, YOU SHOULD GO TO HELL...
YOU WILL BE CURSED!
THE ONE WHO DIED WASN'T THE KING!
SO WHERE IS HE?
GENERAL ZHAO LIN... WHERE IS THE KING?
ROYAL ADVISOR, I DON'T KNOW EITHER.
HA...
I THINK THAT HE...
IS IN A PLACE ONLY I KNOW OF.

It's not Lord Ling..
Other than him, wha else knows about this place?
Who could it be?
Lord Ling said...
that other people are forbidden to enter...

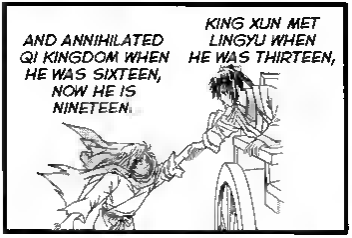
This person...
WHO ARE YOU?

WHY...
IS A CRIMINAL HERE?
CRIMINAL?
SPEAK.
On his forehead...
A brand...
The mark of a criminal!

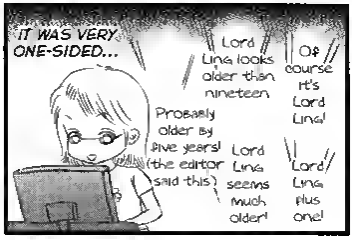
EVER SINCE MY RETURN TO DING KINGDOM SIX YEARS AGO...
NO ONE...
HAS EVER ADDRESSED ME* IN SUCH A WAY.
(Note: Here he is using the royal form of "me")
Eh?
At that moment,
This person's aura...

This is the King!
He is King Xun...
and fearsome eyes...

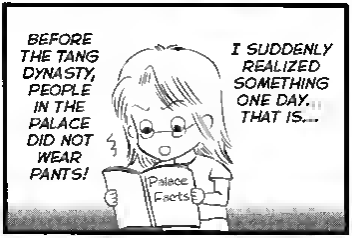
The Secret of the Age

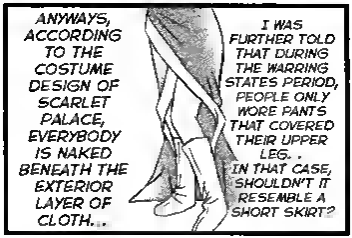


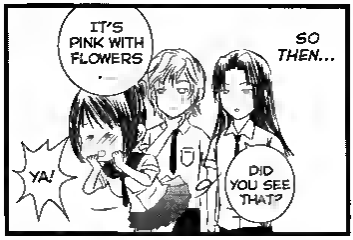
A BISHIE'S AGE IS ALSO A SECRET!
I CAN'T HELP MYSELF BUT TO ASK FOR THE READERS' OPINIONS ON WHO IS OLDER, LORD LING OR THE KING, BUT
SO HOW OLD IS LORD LING NOW?

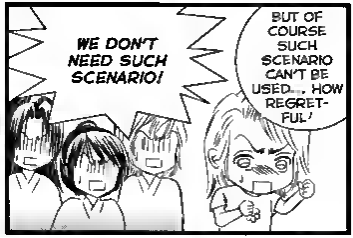

IT WAS VERY ONE-SIDED...
Lord Ling looks older than nineteen
Of course it's Lord Ling!
Probably older by five years! (the editor said this)
Lord Ling seems much older!
Lord Ling plus one!

The Costume Design Drama?

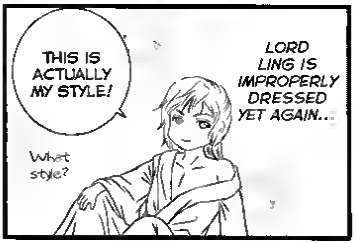

BEFORE THE TANG DYNASTY, PEOPLE IN THE PALACE DID NOT WEAR PANTS!
Palace Facts
I SUDDENLY REALIZED SOMETHING ONE DAY. THAT IS...

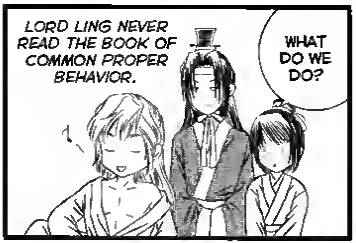

ANYWAYS, ACCORDING TO THE COSTUME DESIGN OF SCARLET PALACE, EVERYBODY IS NAKED BENEATH THE EXTERIOR LAYER OF CLOTH...
I WAS FURTHER TOLD THAT DURING THE WARRING STATES PERIOD, PEOPLE ONLY WORE PANTS THAT COVERED THEIR UPPER LEG. . IN THAT CASE, SHOULDN'T IT RESEMBLE A SHORT SKIRT?

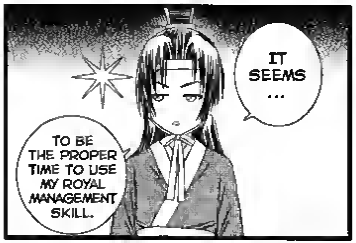


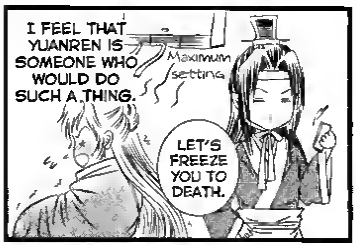


The Dainty Lord Ling's Enemy?

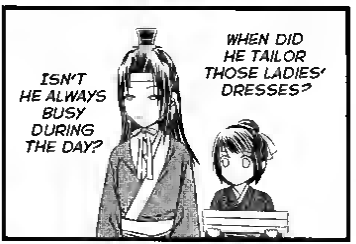


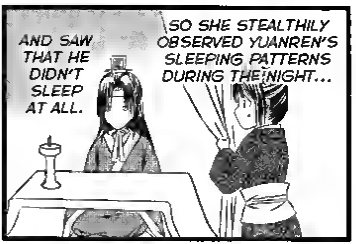






Sister Ninghu's Question





Actually what Yuanren does at night is very important to the plot (spoiler)